



Standards & Assessment UPDATE

California Department of Education
Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

September 2006

Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

STAR Results

On August 15, 2006, the California Department of Education (CDE) posted the results by school, school district, county, and state for the 2006 STAR Program results for more than 4.7 million students. The results showed steady improvement over last year, particularly in English-language arts (ELA) and mathematics. Forty-two percent of students statewide scored proficient or advanced in ELA, an increase of two percent from last year and seven percent from 2003. Forty percent of students statewide scored proficient or advanced in mathematics, an increase of two percent from last year and five percent from 2003. The numbers of students taking Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II and Earth science, biology, and chemistry also increased significantly. While all subgroups have improved over time, African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and economically disadvantaged students, as well as students with disabilities and English learners, continue to score below other students.

The state, county, school district, and school results may be found on the CDE Web site at <http://star.cde.ca.gov/>.

California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

Exemption for Students with Disabilities

On January 30, 2006, Senate Bill (SB) 517 was signed into law and took effect immediately, providing a one-year exemption from the requirement to pass the CAHSEE for certain students with disabilities in the class of 2006. As a result of the passage of SB 517 (*Education Code Section 60852.3*), for the 2005–06 school year, all local educational agencies (LEAs) are required to grant a high school diploma to students with disabilities under the conditions outlined in the law. If the LEA does not grant a diploma pursuant to this exemption, the State Board of Education (SBE) must review the LEAs decision and may direct the LEA to grant a high school diploma to the student.

At its September 6, 2006, meeting, the SBE heard 188 such cases submitted by 22 LEAs. Of the 188 records, 183 indicated that the students had not satisfied or will not satisfy all other state and local requirements for the receipt of a high school diploma. Further, 148 of the 188 did not have an individualized education program (IEP) dated on or before July 1, 2005, indicating the students were scheduled to receive a high school diploma in 2006, and 163 of the 188 had not attempted to pass the CAHSEE at least twice after grade ten, including at least once during grade twelve. Therefore, the SBE approved the CDE recommendation to affirm the LEA decisions not to grant diplomas in all 188 cases.

Data Collection for SB 517

Education Code 60852.3 requires school districts to report information pertaining to students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan dated on or before July 1, 2005, that indicates the student is scheduled to graduate in 2006, but who has not yet passed both sections of the CAHSEE. The data to be reported to the CDE are specified in the *California Code of Regulations* Section 1207.2 for all students who are scheduled to graduate with a 2006 diploma by December 31, 2006.

District CAHSEE coordinators were contacted on June 21, 2006, with specific information regarding the submission of this data. If you have not already done so, please submit the required data as outlined in the June 21, 2006, letter. If you have any questions about this data collection, please contact the Assessment Data Management Office in the Standards and Assessment Division, at (916) 319-0784.

Calculator Use as a Modification

The CDE was recently advised by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) that it will allow California some flexibility with respect to the use of modifications, in particular, the use of a calculator on the CAHSEE. Students who take the CAHSEE with a modification receive a "not valid" score that is recorded as "Modified" on the individual score report. In the 2004–05 school year, all students who took the CAHSEE with a modification were included in the participation rate calculated for adequate yearly progress (AYP), but were counted as "not proficient." However, the ED indicated that, beginning with the 2005–06 school year, we could no longer count students who tested with modifications as participating for AYP calculations. ED has granted California flexibility that would allow the use of a converted score in the AYP calculation that would be equivalent to a score without the use of a calculator. This plan not only allows the students to be counted as participating, but also allows CDE to include some of these students as proficient in the calculations of annual measurable objectives (AMO).

Please note that this plan only applies to the use of a calculator on the CAHSEE. Students who accessed the CAHSEE with other modifications will not be counted as participating.

If you have any questions regarding the CAHSEE program, please contact the High School Exit Exam Office, in the Standards and Assessment Division, at (916) 445-9449 or by e-mail at cahsee@cde.ca.gov. If you have questions related to the calculations of the AYP, please contact the Academic and Accountability Unit, in the Policy and Evaluation Division, at (916) 319-0863 or by e-mail at aau@cde.ca.gov.

CAHSEE Achievement Standards

During the 2006 Peer Review process, the ED noted that the SBE had not officially approved the CAHSEE achievement standards (i.e., cut scores) used for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reporting purposes. At its September 6, 2006, meeting, the SBE adopted the CAHSEE achievement standards (i.e., basic, proficient, and advanced cut scores) that have been in place since February 2004.

For additional information regarding the CAHSEE achievement standards used for NCLB reporting purposes, please refer to the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/sept06item9.doc>.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT)

Guidelines for Reclassification of English Learners

At its September 6, 2006, meeting, the SBE adopted revised Guidelines for Reclassification of English Learners. In order to comply with NCLB reporting requirements, the CELDT Listening/Speaking score is now reported as separate Listening and Speaking scores. The Guidelines for the Reclassification of English Learners, originally approved by SBE in October 2001, was revised to reflect these new scores.

The revised guidelines may be found on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr06/documents/sep06item10.doc>. The guidelines also will be incorporated in the next release of the Assistance Packet for School Districts/Schools that will be posted on the CDE Web site in the near future.

New Performance Level Cut Scores

The new performance level cut scores and common scale for the CELDT took effect July 1, 2006. School districts will receive student reports based on the new cut scores six to eight weeks after delivery to the contractor for scoring. The common scale will allow districts and the state to track growth across adjacent grade spans at the scale score level.

The new performance levels may be found on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/el/cutpoints.asp>. In October 2006, Frequently Asked Questions regarding the new performance levels and common scale will be posted on the CDE Web site. If you have any questions on the CELDT program, please contact the CELDT and Psychometrics Office in the Standards and Assessment Division, at (916) 445-8420 or by e-mail at celdt@cde.ca.gov.

More information...

For more information about any of the mentioned SBE items, access the SBE agenda on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/>.